



ipid

**Department:
Independent Police Investigative Directorate
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

Report on Provincial Visit: Gauteng Office.

Date: 23 June 2014

The Corporate Governance Office conducted an Ethics Climate Survey at the Gauteng Provincial Office as a result of poor performance noted by the Office of the Executive Director.

The Ethics Climate Survey sought to promote and communicate the IPID Values as well as to assess the corporate culture at the Gauteng Provincial Office. The objective was to identify problems to explain poor performance as the Gauteng Office had not submitted recommendations to National Office for the last 5 months. The findings are as follows:

1. Application of Values.

- Investigators are familiar with the Values of the organization, aware of the IPID mandate and the need to be above reproach.
- However, the culture of the provincial office is such that dysfunctional organizational factors, (of poor management and leadership, the current Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) requiring 'completed cases' for statistical purposes, a lack of teamwork and cohesion, and factionalism etc.) have resulted in the IPID Values not being enacted or practiced.
- The result is a weak and fragmented corporate culture that contributes to poor performance and inefficiency, and holds the office back from achieving excellence.

It is important to note the following:

- a) Organizational culture (including a weak and fragmented one) is passed on to new employees. An investigator reported that when he arrived in 2011, many cases were not investigated fully and only 'completed' for statistical purposes. The practice continues to this day.

- b) Organisational culture influences behavior at work. The work atmosphere at the Gauteng Office is not positive and reinforcing. Management and investigators could see an injustice occurring, but allowed the practice to continue without raising the alarm, as the 'completion' of cases had become an expedient organizational practice.

2. Investigations.

The Gauteng office continued with dysfunctional organizational systems and practices of:

- a) Doing the minimum tasks required to bring the file to a 'completed' stage where the case meets only organizational performance and statistical reporting demands. No further work needs to be done and the investigator proceeds to another case.
- b) Maintaining a culture where few recommendations are made, for example to the DPP, resulting in few dockets proceeding to the DPP and to court. It was reported by investigators that Provincial senior managers state that "going to court is a waste of time" and actively deter investigators from proceeding to court. Many investigators have little experience in court procedure and court etiquette, and not currently confident nor competent enough to endure questioning or cross-examination by prosecutors, magistrates, judges or attorneys who are well skilled and motivated.
- c) An investigator confided that many investigators have not been to court and some have 'emerged with their tail between their legs', and others have "been boiled like potatoes". He reported that there is a fear of going to court.

3. Evaluation System

- a) Feedback on Provincial Performance is non-existent and staff receive feedback only after Manco meetings –and not from monthly or quarterly reports. An investigator reported that he reads about the provincial office from the Annual Report.

4. Conflict between skilled experienced staff, and staff with legal qualifications with limited experience.

- a) Skilled and professional investigators, previously from SAPS, at the Gauteng Office are currently sidelined in favour of academically (legal) qualified staff with limited practical

experience who are deferred to by current management. This results in skilled staff feeling isolated and not recognized for their experience.

5. Investigator Case Loads

- a) There exists an obvious discrepancy amongst investigator case loads and the ability to complete cases. Some investigators carry a case load of 60 files, others between 125 and 240.
- b) The high case loads, and invariable requirement that cases be 'completed' for statistical or target purposes, diminishes the task significance, in relation to the extent to which the job affects the lives of people within or outside the organization. This practice contributes to a low motivation potential for investigators.

Recommendations:

1. 'Completion' of cases.

The current practice wherein minimal investigating procedures and standards are used to bring a case to a 'completed stage' for target or statistical purposes – be stopped and prohibited. Cases should be closed only once an investigation is finalized, recommendations are made, or the matter is finalized in Court.

The SOP to be amended accordingly.

2. Acting Provincial Head

The current Acting - Provincial Head should be allowed to transfer to Legal Services.

3. Skilled and experienced staff should have their jobs redesigned to include management functions and responsibilities.

4. Investigators and Supervisors, and Management should be accountable for their job functions, duties and responsibilities and submit monthly reports on work performance and achievements. These reports should be receipted and preserved.

5. **Current Performance Targets**

The current performance targets for cases to be 'completed' should be changed. The current targets are useful only as objectives, and should not be used to determine provincial performance.

6. **Extensive training plan to be developed** to equip investigators with the skills, and confidence to finalize investigations up to and including a court appearance where necessary. This requires extensive 'Detective Training', training in Law of Evidence, Criminal Procedure and Court Etiquette and Proceedings amongst others.
7. **Confusing terminology**, especially 'Positive Recommendations' (take no action) which mean the opposite, and 'negative recommendations' (take action) which also mean the opposite, should not be used. This is counter-productive and confusing to investigators and stakeholders.
8. **Flexible Working Hours for Investigators**. The current practice of having investigators report to the office by 7:30 before any field work commences is a bad management practice and should be changed.